Whitehall

ANNUAL REPORT

UPON THE

Health of the Urban District of Usk,

FOR THE YEAR 1938.

BY

J. C. H. BIRD,

Medical Officer of Health.

USK:

Printed by Tudor J. Hayward, New Market Street.

RIVERSIDE HOUSE,

USK,

JUNE, 1939.

To the Chairman and Members of the Usk Urban District Council.

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present the Medical Officer of Health's Annual Report for the year 1938, arranged in accordance with Circular Memo. 1728 (Wales) of the Welsh Board of Health.

Statistics and Social Conditions of the Area.

The Registrar-General's estimate of the population in mid 1938 was 1,228.

The number of inhabited houses according to the rate books was 379.

The number of families or separate occupiers was 372.

The rateable value—£6,650.

The sum represented by a penny rate—£25.

Social conditions in the area are satisfactory. The chief industries are Wood Turnery and Sawyery, Shop-keeping, Carriage Building and Repairing. The construction of a Royal Ordnance Factory near the town has attracted many men formerly engaged in other vocations, mainly agricultural, and has also caused an influx of engineers, architects, surveyors and craftsmen. The amount of unemployment has been considerably reduced.

Extracts from Vital Statistics for the Year 1938.

LIVE BIRTHS.	Total	M.	F.
Legitimate ...	19	7	12
Illegitimate ...	1	1	0
Total Live Births ...	20	8	12

STILL BIRTHS	Total	M.	F.
Legitimate ...	1	0	1
Illegitimate ...	0	0	0
Total Still Births ...	1	0	1

Birth Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population 16.42

Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) Births ... 17.1

	Total	M.	F.
DEATHS	29	14	15

Death Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population 23.6

There were no deaths from puerperal causes.

Death Rate of Infants under one year of age ... Nil
All Infants per 1,000 legitimate live births ... Nil
Legitimate Infants per 1,000 legitimate live births ... Nil
Illegitimate Infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births Nil

Deaths from Cancer (all ages) 4
Deaths from Measles (all ages) ... ... Nil
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages) ... Nil
Deaths from Diarrhœa (under 2 years) ... Nil

There was no unusual or excessive mortality during the year.

Comparison of Vital Statistics.

	Usk Urban.	County of Monmouth,	England and Wales
Birth Rate ...	16.42	16.1	15.1
Death Rate ...	23.6	12.1	11.6
Infantile Mortality Rate	Nil	55.8	5.3

From the above figures it would appear that the Death Rate of the District is high in comparison with the others. When the Death Rate is corrected by the "Comparability Factor," supplied by the Registrar-General, the Death Rate becomes 18·17. A rise in the Death Rate was to be expected in 1938 to compensate for the remarkably low figure (9.85) reached in 1937.

It must also be remembered that when dealing with a small population, such as that of Usk, statistics are apt to be misleading, e.g., compare Infantile Mortality Rate of Usk and that of County.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA.

Public Health Officers of the Local Authority.

Clerk (part time)	...	E. S. B Pratt, Esq.
Medical Officer (part time)	...	J. C. H. Bird, M.B., Ch.B.
Sanitary Inspector (part time)		J. H. M. Jolliffe, C.S.I.B.
Surveyor (part time)	...	A. L. Lucas.
Pathologist and Analyst	...	County.

Nursing in the Home.

General Nursing and Midwifery is performed by a District Nurse, who is supported partly by the County, and partly by the Usk Nursing Association.

Infectious Disease Nursing—no nurse provided.

Laboratory Facilities.

Examination of Pathological specimens, and examination and analysis of water, food and milk is performed by the County Pathologist and Analyst.

Ambulance Facilities.

For general cases—St. John Ambulance. Infectious cases—Ambulance supplied by the Infectious Disease Hospitals in the vicinity.

Treatment Centre and Clinics.

A Clinic is held every Market Monday for Maternity Infant and Child Welfare. This is supported by the County Council, and is under the control of the County Medical Officer. Venereal Disease Clinic—Royal Gwent Hospital, Newport.

Public Cleansing.

Collection of town is performed once a week. and the refuse suitably disposed of.

The streets are cleaned daily, and all surface traps regularly inspected and disinfected during the summer months.

Sanitary Inspection of the Area.

See Sanitary Inspector's Report.

Camping Sites.

There is one camping site in the area, which has only one caravan thereon. Sanitation and water supply is satisfactory.

Smoke Abatement.

No action taken.

Swimming Bath and Pools.

The River Usk is used extensively for swimming during the summer months. This is controlled by the Usk Board of Conservators.

Eradication of Bed-Bug.

Four cases of infestation were reported during the year, and the necessary action was taken. The reagents used are Cimex and Zaldecide (see Sanitary Inspector's Report).

Schools.

The area is served by four schools. The sanitation and water supply has been satisfactory. The prompt notification by schools of infectious diseases is a great help in preventing the spread of such infection.

Prevalence of, and Control over, Infectious and Other Diseases.

The incidence of zymotic disease in the area continues to be very slight. In cases where adequate facilities for nursing in isolation are not present, removal to hospital is arranged.

Hospitals—Public and Voluntary.

The following Hospitals are available for the inhabitants of Usk :—

General Medical and Surgical—Royal Gwent Hospital, Newport Pontypool and District Hospital. Public Assistance Hospital, Griffithstown.

Children's Diseases—Royal Gwent Hospital. Pontypool and District Hospital.

Venereal Diseases—Royal Gwent Hospital.

Infectious Diseases—Buckholt Hospital, Monmouth. Isolation Hospital, Chepstow. Allt-yr-yn Hospital, Newport.

Small Pox—County Small Pox Hospital.

Mental—Abergavenny Mental Institution.

For Unmarried Mothers—Nantyderry House.

Sanitary Circumstances in the Area.

WATER.—During the year the existing water supply was taken over by the Pontypool Gas and Water Company.

At the end of the year a chemical and bacteriological examination revealed the presence of harmful bacteria. The populace was warned of the necessity of boiling all water used for drinking purposes until steps had been taken to secure a safe supply. On being informed of the pollution the Pontypool Gas and Water Co. immediately transferred the source of supply from the Usk source to to the Pontypool reservoir, and for some weeks the area consumed Pontypool water. After the installation of a suitable filtration and chlorination plant the Pandy water was again used.

My thanks are due to the Pontypool Gas and Water Co. for their prompt and efficient action.

Drainage and Sewerage.

The question of the provision of a new drainage and sewerage system is still sub-judice. The present sewerage disposal plant is antiquated, and not very efficient, and will have to be rectified in the near future.

Rivers and Streams.

Every effort is being made by Officers of the Council to prevent avoidable pollution. Legal action is taken by the Usk Board of Conservators in case of wilful pollution. The matter of flood prevention is systematically pursued under the powers of the Public Health Act.

The various brooks in the area are periodically cleaned out.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES during the Year.

Diseases.	Total Cases Notified.	Cases admitted to Hospital.	Total Deaths.
Scarlet Fever	2	1	Nil.
Pneumonia	1	Nil.	1
Puerperal Pyrexia ...	1	Nil.	Nil.
Enteric Fever	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.
Diphtheria	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.
Small Pox	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.
Other Diseases notifiable locally	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.

Prevention of Blindness.

Nil.

TUBERCULOSIS.

New Cases and Mortality during 1938.

Age Periods.	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Respira'y		Non-Respira'y		Respira'y		Non-Respira'y	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
15	1	—	—	1	—	—	—	1
25	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
35	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
45	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
55	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
65 and upwards ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals ...	2	—	—	1	3	—	—	1

There was one unnotified death from Tuberculosis.

Deaths from All Causes in Usk Urban District.

Cause of Death..	Males.	Females.
Acute and chronic nephritis ...	1	—
Senility	—	2
Suicide	1	—
Other defined diseases ...	1	2
Heart disease	2	2
Other circulatory diseases ...	3	3
Bronchitis	—	1
Pneumonia (all forms) ...	—	2
Tuberculosis of respiratory system	3	1
Other Tuberculosis	—	1
Cancer	3	1
Total	14	15

In conclusion, Gentlemen, I would like to pay tribute to the memory of our late respected Medical Officer of Health, Dr. E. L. M. Hackett, whose death in November, of 1938, left the district so much the poorer.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

J. C. H. BIRD.

S.D.55.

BIRTH-RATES, DEATH-RATES, ANALYSIS OF MORTALITY MATERNAL DEATH-RATES, AND CASE-BIRTHS FOR CERTAIN INFECTIOUS DISEASES IN THE YEAR 1938.

England and Wales, London
128 Great Towns and
148 Smaller Towns.

(Provisional Figures based on Weekly and Quarterly Returns).

	England and Wales.	126 County Boro's and Great Towns including London.	148 Smaller Towns (Resident Populations 25,000 to 50,000 at 1931 Census).	London Administrative County.
		Rates per	1,000 Population	
Births :—				
Live	10. 1	15. 0	15. 4	13.4
Still	0.60	0.65	0.60	0.48
Deaths :—				
All Causes	11. 0	11. 7	11. 0	11. 4
Typhoid and Paratyphoid fevers	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Smallpox	0.00	—	0.00	—
Measles	0.04	0.05	0.03	0.06
Scarlet Fever	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Whooping Cough	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.03
Diphtheria	0.07	0.07	0.06	0.05
Influenza	0.11	0.10	0.11	0.06

Notifications :—				
Smallpox	0.00	0.00	0.00	—
Scarlet Fever	2.41	2.60	2.58	2.05
Diphtheria	1.58	1,85	1.53	1.90
Enteric Fever	0.03	0.03	0.04	0.05
Erysipelas	0.40	0.46	0.39	0.46
Pneumonia	1.10	1.28	0.98	0.98
		Rates per 1,000	Live Births	
Deaths under 1 year of age ...	53	57	51	57
Deaths from Diarrhœa and Enteritis under 2 years of age	5. 5	7. 8	3. 6	13. 1
Maternal Mortality :—				
Puerperal Sepsis ...	0.89	Not	available.	
Others	2.19			
Total	3.08			
	Rates per	1,000 Total Births	(i.e., Live and	Still).
Maternal Mortality :—				
Puerperal Sepsis	0.86	Not	available.	
Others	2.11			
Total	2.97			
Notifications :—				
Puerperal Fever ... / Puerperal Pyrexia	14.42	18.08	12.51	3.53 / 15.46

ANNUAL REPORT OF SANITARY INSPECTOR.

Abergavenny Road,
Usk,
1st June, 1939.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

I beg to submit my Annual Report on the work carried out in my Department during the year 1938.

Sanitary Inspection of the Area.

Houses	47
Re-Inspections	114
Camping Grounds, Tents and Living Vans	9
Nuisances	41
Cowsheds and Dairies	20
Slaughter-houses	583
Premises where food is prepared, stored and sold ...	275
Water Supplies	2
Disinfections	5
Disinfestations	8
Total	1104

Housing Tables.

1. Inspections of dwelling houses during the year :—

(i.) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects under the Public Health or Housing Acts	47
Number of inspections for the purpose ...	51
(ii.) Number of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925	45
Number of inspections for the purpose ...	49
(iii.) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	1

(iv.) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation 10

2. Remedy of defects during the year without the service of formal notice :—

Number of dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers 29

3. Action under Statutory powers during the year :—

(a.) Proceedings under Section 9, etc., of the Housing Act, 1936 ... ... Nil

(b.) Proceedings under the Public Health Acts :—

(i.) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied 11

(ii.) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices ... 10

(All by Owners).

(c.) Proceedings under Section 11 of the Housing Act, 1936 : No action taken.

4.—Housing Act, 1936—Part iv.—Overcrowding :—

No case of overcrowding came to the notice of the Department during the year, but the housing accommodation of the District is taxed considerably owing to the influx of lodgers due to the construction of a Royal Ordnance Factory near the Town. The number of people letting apartments has increased, and the number of houses with more than one family therein has also increased. Although the number of houses has increased during the year, this has not by any means met the demands, especially for the working class population, the majority of the new houses being far above the working man's pocket. The shortage of houses which could be let at a reasonable rent is far inadequate, and this has led to a great increase in rents, especially for houses of the five-roomed type.

Camping Grounds, Tents, Vans and Sheds.

There is one camping ground in the District, which has at present only one van upon it. The sanitary accommodation and water supply are satisfactory.

The living vans used in connection with the Trinity Fair still give cause for anxiety, there being a number of complaints therefrom during their stay in the Area. Although there is a good camping ground, the vans still persist in parking in the streets. It is evil enough for the ordinary living vans to be in the streets, but it is still more unsatisfactory when some of the men sleep in the vans used for the conveyance of the materials, and are to be seen performing their ablutions in the streets, whilst they have to go to the houses which surround the Square for their sanitary accommodation.

Schools.

The sanitation and water supply of the schools are satisfactory

Shops and Offices.

The shops have been visited, and particulars taken under the provisions of the Shops Act, 1934, which are administered by this authority. No action was taken however, as this authority may be designated as the Shops Acts Authority with full powers, and further action has been delayed until that time.

Smoke Abatement

No Action taken.

Swimming Baths and Pools.

The only swimming place is in the River Usk, which is controlled by the Board of Conservators.

Nuisances.

A number of these were reported and investigated, and all were remedied by informal action.

The Eradication of Bed Bugs.

The occupiers of four premises were served with notices to remove vermin from their houses, and in three instances these were complied with, the Local Authority having rendered assistance in the form of disinfesting the houses with "Cimex," and spraying with "Zaldecide." One occupier was however defiant, and he was summoned, and fined £1 with costs.

Serious infestations occurred at the Almshouses, and the work of ridding these premises from bed bugs occupied some months. The vermin were, however, eradicated by the destruction of all infested beds and bedding, and the spraying of the walls, and disinfesting with "Cimex" and "Cescones." It had been suggested that H.C.N. should be used, but this was not thought to be advisable owing to the porous nature of the walls, and the difficulty of housing the inmates temporarily. The occupiers' personal clothing was passed through a steam disinfector.

Meat Inspection.

	Cattle (ex. Cows).	Cows.	Calves.	Sheep.	Pigs.	Total.
Number killed ...	135	72	61	1941	895	3102
Number inspected	121	65	49	1883	804	2922
Whole carcases condemned (T.B.)	Nil.	1	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	1
Portions of carcases condemned (T.B.)	1	2	Nil.	Nil.	1	4
Whole carcases condemned (ex. T.B.)	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.
Portions of carcases condemned (ex. T.B.) ...	4	Nil.	6	21	33	64
Weight of meat condemned (ex. offal)	21 lbs.	921 lbs.	Nil.	Nil.	10 lbs.	952 lbs.
Weight of offal condemned ...	35 lbs.	104 lbs.	16 lbs.	89 lbs.	173 lbs.	417 lbs.

Some difficulty arose when the butchers were lax in their notification of slaughtering, but warnings soon remedied this. It should also be pointed out that slaughtering takes place on the majority of days of the week, and I have only two days per week at my disposal for work within the Urban District. Nevertheless, no fewer than 583 visits were paid to slaughter-houses during the year.

It would be an advantage if someone could be appointed who would be able to carry out the meat inspection whilst I am absent from the district.

There are now only two slaughter-houses in the district, two having been closed during the year.

During the year the clause in the Slaughter of Animals Act, 1933, which related to the stunning of sheep was adopted, this being done with the assistance of the R.S.P.C.A.

Other Food Inspection.

275 visits were paid to premises where food is prepared, stored and sold. The following goods were found to be unfit :—

Fish	14 lbs.
Cooked meats	42 lbs.
Bacon	140 lbs.
Fruit (fresh)	374 lbs.
Fruit (tinned)	374 tins.
Other bottled and tinned goods ...	684 tins and bottles.

Milk Supply.

Particulars on registers at end of year :—

Producers	3
Retailers	4

One producer has a " T.T." licence, and one an " Accredited " licence, whilst there is one " Accredited " retailer in the Area.

The three dairy farms were visited regularly, and no cause for complaint was found.

FACTORIES, WORKSHOPS AND WORKPLACES

1.—INSPECTIONS for purposes of provision as to health.

Including Inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors.

Premises. (1)	Number of Inspections (2).	Written Notices. (3)	Occupiers prosecuted (4)
FACTORIES with mechanical power ...	0	0	0
FACTORIES without mechanical powers ...	30	3	0
OTHER PREMISES under the Act (including works of building and engineering construction but not including outworkers' premises)	4	1	0
Total	34	4	0

2—DEFECTS FOUND.

Particulars. (1)	Number of Defects. Found. (2)	Remed'd (3)	Refer'd to H.M. Inspect'r (4)	No. of defects in resp't of which Prosecutions were institut'd (5)
Want of Cleanliness (S. 1)	2	2	Nil.	Nil.
Overcrowding (S. 2)				
Unreasonable temperature (S. 3) ...				
Inadequate ventilatiou (S. 4) ...				
Ineffective drainage of floors (S. 6) ...				
Sanitary Conveniences (S. 7) insufficient ...			—	
Sanitary Conveniences (S. 7) unsuitable or defective			—	
Sanitary Conveniences (S. 7) not separate for sexes			—	
Other offences ... ... (Not including offences relating to Home Work or offences under the Sections mentioned in the Schedule to the Ministry of Health (Factories and Workshops Transfer of Powers) Order, 1921, and re-enacted in the Third Schedule to the Factories Act, 1937)	2	2		
Total	4	4	Nil.	Nil.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

JAMES H. M. JOLLIFFE.